

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

How can the Source Water Protection Specialist help your system?

- Provide on-site technical assistance to water systems that use either ground or surface water as their source water at NO CHARGE.
- Assist coordinating efforts by forming partnerships between multiple jurisdictions, such as multiple public water systems utilizing a common source, villages, towns, cities, townships and counties, and users of the source water including recreational groups, governmental agencies, Educational Schools.
- Provide outreach materials.
- Provide presentations to local officials and the public.
- Assist in the development, implementation and sustainability of Source Water Protection Plans.



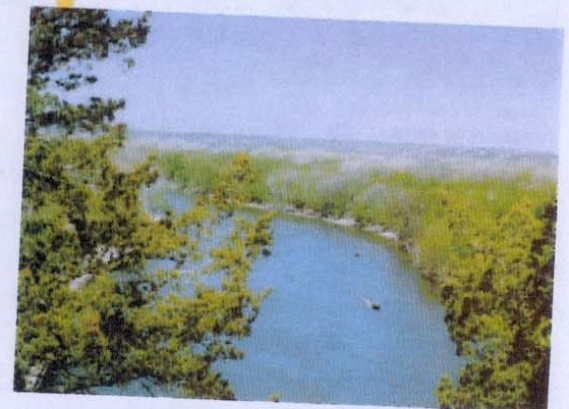
Water Supply Protection Area Signs heighten the awareness for the public.

Sourcewater Protection Specialist
760 W. Spruce Street
P.O. Box 960
Harrison MI. 48625

Michigan Rural Water Association

Michigan Rural Water Association

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION



MRWA
PO Box 960
Harrison, MI 48625
Phone: 989-539-4111
FAX: 989-539-4055

WHAT IS SOURCE WATER PROTECTION?

The value of a clean, high quality drinking water supply cannot be overestimated. Public Water Supplies (PWS) invest a considerable amount of time and money in their water systems, so it only makes sense to protect that investment. The high costs associated with aquifer remediation and developing alternative water supplies alone are substantial reasons for making protection of a public water system's water source a priority.

The Source Water Protection Program is meant to be a tool for PWS's to ensure their drinking water remains clean and of high quality now and for future generations. The Program begins with creating a planning team, whose goal is to initiate, lead and oversee the development and implementation of a plan.

The program is designed to be a multi-barrier, multi-jurisdictional approach to continually manage and protect public drinking water. PWS participation in the protection program is an indication to the public that the community leaders and water system managers are committed to providing the public with quality drinking water. The goal of the program is best described by our motto "Quality on Tap."



Cooperation and teamwork are necessary for success.

History

In 1996, the United States Congress amended the Safe

Drinking Water Act to add Source Water Protection planning in order to expand on the efforts of Wellhead Protection, and to include surface water systems in the protection planning process. The Michigan Rural Water Association (MRWA) began its Source Water Protection Program in Michigan in 2004. MRWA will also assist communities in utilizing the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Source Water Assessment report for their Public Water Supply.

The Program & The Plan

The best means of protecting drinking water is at the local level through community involvement. The Source Water Protection Program begins when local towns and communities create a steering committee comprised of people who represent the various interests in the potential Source Water Protection area. This committee is given the responsibility of developing their own plan. The plan must include identification of the protection area (the delineation), potential sources of contaminants, the method of management, and a contingency plan for the public water supply in the event of contamination. Program development and technical assistance is available from the Michigan Rural Water Association.

Benefits

Completion of the program leaves a PWS with valuable data about their water source that can be used to help plan for the future. Having the data on hand can also be used to avoid possible conflicts or problems that might otherwise have occurred because the PWS did not have a full understanding of their water source.

The Michigan DEQ sees the Program as a tool communities use to reduce the risk to their drinking water. MRWA can help the Public Water System's with updating of their Emergency Response Plan, as part of the Source Water Plan.

Why is it important?

There is probably no other environmental area where the adage "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" has as much meaning as it does in water protection.

- Protection from contamination is a key to **maintaining good quality water**. One way to protect water supplies is to protect the area surrounding a well or surface water intake.

There is a **profound financial impact** on communities when their water supply becomes contaminated

- Installing treatment facilities, locating new water sources, or contamination remediation are **costly alternatives**.
- The only sure way of ensuring a safe quality water supply, now and for the future, is to **protect the source**.
- **Water can be contaminated from many sources** on the land surface, water surface or underground. Potential sources of contamination include croplands and lawns treated with fertilizers and pesticides, landfills, septic tank drain fields, underground storage tanks, abandoned wells, animal feedlots, industrial/mining impoundments, and accidental spills.

Growing interest in year-round recreational activities finds larger numbers of people in areas where recharge and source waters originate, greatly increasing the potential for source water contamination

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever does.

— Margaret Mead

Michigan Rural Water Association

Sourcewater Protection Specialist
780 W. Spruce Street
P.O. Box 960
Harrison MI. 48625
Phone: 989-539-4111
Fax: 989-539-4055
Email: MIRuralWater@aol.com